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No. 20.

FAIRMOUNT PARK ART ASSOCIATION.

UNVEILING OF THE

EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF

Major-General George Gordon Meade,

FAIRMOUNT PARK, PHILADELPHIA,

Tuesday, October 18th, 1887.

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PHILADELPHIA.

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ORDER OF EXERCISES

At the Memorial Services Unveiling the Equestrian Statue of Major-General George Gordon Meade, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, Tuesday, October 18th, 1887, at 3 P. M.

His Honor Edwin H. Fitler,
Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, presiding.

Music, First Regiment Band.

Invocation and Prayer.
The Rt. Rev. Cortlandt Whitehead, D. D., Bishop of Pittsburgh.

America—Chorus.
Led by Col O. C. Bosbyshell.

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrim's pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

Our Father's God, to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee I sing.
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might;
Great God, our King.

Opening Remarks
Hon. Edwin H. Fitler.

PRESENTATION OF THE STATUE

To the Commissioners of Fairmount Park by
Hon. Benjamin Harris Brewster,
of the Fairmount Park Art Association, and the Unveiling of the Statue by
Master George Gordon Meade
and
Master George Gordon Meade Large,
Grandsons of General Meade.

Music.

RECEPTION OF THE STATUE

By Hon. George H. Boker, President of the Commissioners of Fairmount Park.

Music.

Oration.
Major-General John Gibbon, U. S. Army.

Doxology—"Old Hundred."

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

MILITARY.

Marshal—Colonel James C. Biddle.

Standard bearers supporting three historic flags:—

Headquarters Army of Potomac, Headquarters Fifth Corps, Headquarters Pennsylvania Reserves.

Chief of staff—Gen. B. F. Fisher. Aids—Gen. H. J. Hunt, Gen. F. J. Locke, Gen. A. S. Webb, Gen. J. C. Duane, Gen. P. A. Oliver, Gen. R. C. Drum, Gen. J. Wilson, Col. Charles E. Cadwalader, Col. A. J. Mason, Col. Emlen N. Carpenter, Col. W. H. Paine, Col. J. R. Dickinson, Col. F. Wister, Col. J. P. Brinton, Col. J. R. Coxe, Col. D. W. Flagler, Col. E. R. Warner, Col. H. C. Hodges, Col. A. P. Martin, Col. A. C. Wildrick, Col. Francis J. Crilly, Col. James C. Lynch, Col. W. Jay, John A. Wiedersheim, Major W. E. Barrows, Major H. J. Farnsworth, Major J. W. Williams, Captain John Taylor, Captain C. McKibben, and Captain A. B. Coxe.

First Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry.

General E. Burd Grubb commanding.

First Division.

Marshal—Major Joseph R. T. Coates, Survivors of the Pennsylvania Reserves, Alexis Band, survivors One Hundred and Fourteenth Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

Total—80.

Second Division.

Marshal—Samuel Harper, Department Commander Grand Army of the Republic of Pennsylvania. Assistant Marshals—D. McGowan, D. T. Davies, H. I. Yohn, J. A. Messimer. Aids—B. Jenkinson, C. H. Timney, A. Levering, W. Rennyson, T. C. Aldred, H. Johnson, S. B. W. Gordon, W. Horrocks, R. J. Nettle, D. S. McClue, J. D. Hoffner, J. A. Junior, J. Undercoffer, J. K. Mansur. Jenning's Sixth Regiment Band, Post No. 1; Evening Call Band, Post 2; Post band, Post 5; Dodsworth Band, Brooklyn, Post 327 (U. S. Grant), Brooklyn; four carriages, containing disabled veterans; drum corps, Post 6; Post band, Post 11, Post 18; Jefferson Band, Post 19, Post 150; band, Post 191; Bridge-

port Band, Post 21, Bridgeport, Pa.; Clover Band, Post 14; Military Cornet Band, Post 46; Athletic Band, Post 94; Ellsworth Band, Post 71; Fidelity Band, Post 24; West End Band, Post 103; National Band, Post 7; Franklin Band, Post 10; United States Band, Post 51; Republic Band, Post 160; Kearney Post Band, Post 55; Harmonic Band, Post 63, Post 80; band, Post 114; Dupont Band, Wilmington, Post 2, Wilmington, Del.; Plainfield Band, Post 73, Plainville, N. J.; W. Nelson Band, Post 115; Keystone Band, Post 228; West Philadelphia Band, Post 275, Post 312; Mt. Pleasant Band, Post 82; Morning Call Band, Post 16.

Total—3042.

Third Division.

First Brigade, National Guard of Pennsylvania.

Brigadier-General George R. Snowden commanding.

Staff—Major Charles H. Townsend, Major R. S. Huidekoper, Major A. Lawrence Wetherill, Major R. F. Cullinan, Major James W. Cooke, Major William Struthers, Major T. Dewitt Cuyler, Captain Roberts Vaux, and Captain James M. Campbell. Second Regiment, Colonel Robert P. Dechert commanding. Third Regiment, Colonel S. Bonnaffon, Jr., commanding. First Regiment, Colonel W. P. Bowman, commanding. Battalion State Fencibles, Major W. Wes. Chew commanding. Gray Invincibles, Captain Charles A. Hailstock. Battery A, Captain Maurice C. Stafford.

Total—1860.

Guests in carriages—Governor James A. Beaver and staff; Major-General John F. Hartranft and staff; Hon. Edwin H. Fitler, Mayor of Philadelphia; officers of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and National Guard, active and retired; members of Congress and Legislature of Pennsylvania.

Fourth Division.

Colonel J. R. C. Ward commanding; Girard College Cadets; Soldiers' Orphans' Cadets, Major Henry F. Spicer commanding; Graduates of Lincoln Institute; Sons of Veterans.

Total—515.

Aggregate—5495.

THE INVOCATION AND PRAYER.

RIGHT REV. CORTLANDT WHITEHEAD, BISHOP OF PITTSBURG.

O God, who art the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; the Almighty Ruler of Nations; we adore and magnify Thy glorious Name. We render Thee thanks for the goodly heritage Thou hast given us; for the civil and religious privileges which we enjoy; and for the multiplied manifestations of Thy favor towards us. Grant that we may show forth our thankfulness for Thy mercies, by living in reverence of Thy Almighty power and dominion, in humble reliance on Thy goodness and mercy, and in holy obedience to Thy righteous laws.

Preserve to our country, we beseech Thee, the blessings of peace so hardly won; restore them to nations deprived of them, and secure them to all the people of the earth. May the kingdom of the Prince of peace come, and, reigning in the hearts and lives of men, unite them in holy fellowship; that so their only strife may be, who shall show forth, with most humble and holy fervor, the praises of Him who hath loved them and made them kings and priests unto God.

We implore Thy blessing on this whole land, that our Rulers may have grace, wisdom, and understanding to execute justice and to maintain truth; that the people may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty; that our lands may yield their increase of the kindly fruits of the earth, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater; and that all things may be so ordered and settled upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us for all generations.

Fashion into one happy people, and weld together in national brotherhood, the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. In the time of our prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in Thee to fail.

We commend to Thee the Officers, Soldiers, and Sailors of the Army and Navy of the United States, and especially the Veterans whose lives are drawing to a close. The more the outward man

faileth, do Thou renew the inward man day by day, and be the strength of their hearts and their portion forever.

We commemorate, O Lord, and give Thee thanks for all Thy servants, the Soldiers of the Republic, and especially for him, the brave General whom we this day delight to honor, who having finished their course, do now rest from their labors. We thank Thee for what they were and for what they accomplished. May the principles for which they fought and bled, and the fabric which they by their courage and loyalty have maintained, ever remain permanent and secure for all the time to come. And, we humbly beseech Thee, give us grace so to follow their good examples, that we with them and they with us, may have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in Thy eternal and everlasting glory.

We commemorate all Thy Saints from the beginning of the world; the Patriarchs and Prophets; the Apostles and Teachers; the noble army of Martyrs, the valiant and magnanimous Defenders of the Truth, and all the company of the Redeemed; looking for the general resurrection of the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord JESUS Christ.

And now, O Lord, direct us, we pray Thee, in all our doings with Thy most gracious favor, and further us with Thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in Thee we may glorify Thy holy Name, and finally by Thy mercy obtain everlasting life, through JESUS Christ our Lord, Who hath taught us when we pray to say: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever." Amen.

His Honor, EDWIN H. FITLER, presiding, spoke as follows:—

We have gathered to-day in this public place, and in the presence of a free people, to unveil this equestrian statue and dedicate it to the memory of General George G. Meade.

It is eminently proper that we should show in this way our

appreciation of the valuable services he rendered his country in her hour of peril. To him the nation owes a debt of gratitude that can never be paid, and this simple but impressive ceremony is but the expression of a patriotic sentiment that desires to show its love and admiration for the memory of one of the bravest heroes that battled for the safety of the Republic.

It is not for me at this time to dwell in detail upon the life, character, and services of General Meade; that pleasant task will be left to the orator of the day. Suffice it for me to say that no soldier in Pennsylvania occupies in her history a higher place, nor is more securely enshrined in the hearts of the people. Wise in council, brave in action, kind, gentle, courteous, he had all the qualities of heart and mind that combine to make true greatness.

A Philadelphian by residence, family ties, and early education, his name will always be identified with the fame of our city, and inseparably linked with the decisive battle of the war.

Gettysburg! What associations cluster about the name! How it carries us back to the hour when an anxious and loyal people stood breathless in the presence of the shock of battle; when, between the North and the battalions of Lee, the Army of the Potomac under Meade stood like a wall of stone; when Pennsylvania shook under the tread of armed men, and the future of the Republic was darkened by the smoke of battle, and her preservation as a Union hung upon the chance of conflict.

Honor to the memory of Meade, who in the darkest hour never despaired, and under whose leadership victory was achieved! A nation that does not reverence her heroes is unworthy the freedom she enjoys. Philadelphia does herself honor in thus honoring her loyal son, and recognizing the value of his services.

Permit me now to introduce to you the Hon. Benjamin Harris Brewster, representing "The Fairmount Park Art Association."

ADDRESS OF HON. BENJAMIN HARRIS BREWSTER.

MR. PRESIDENT:—I have been deputed by the Fairmount Park Art Association to present to you the statue of General Meade, which is about to be unveiled. The ceremonies of this occa-

sion, and the time allotted to another who will pronounce an instructive and appropriate oration applicable to the purpose of our gathering, will oblige me to be brief.

The statue which you are about to receive was executed by Mr. Alexander Milne Calder, our townsman, an artist of established fame and skill. With a sense of public spirit and public duty, the Fairmount Park Art Association caused this fine work of art to be made.

In obtaining the means to pay for it and the pedestal upon which it will stand there was considerable delay arising from a combination of circumstances that were unexpected, and probably we would not have had it here this day had it not been that a committee of one hundred and nineteen ladies, with Mrs. Bellangee Cox as President, undertook to assist in securing the necessary sum.

Thirty thousand dollars has been expended in this fine work of art you are now to possess. The Association I represent is an essential element of all civilized communities, and an important organ of public culture, public morals, and patriotic sentiment. To you they confide this memorial of this patriot, this gentleman, this upright man, this triumphant soldier.

As I have before said, when presenting his bust to the Historical Society: He was our townsman. We knew him or knew of him from his earliest boyhood to the glories of his matured manhood. Those who were his kindred and intimates loved him and respected him for the simplicity, gentleness, and manly tone of his nature. Those who only knew of him saw how he was ruled by a sense of duty to the nation whose standard he followed and whose sword he carried. We were all proud of him living and we all mourned him when he died. His death was felt as a common sorrow, and to this hour it is ever mentioned with emotion as a public calamity.

I will not dilate upon the incidents of his life or his career. We all know them. The nation knows them. The history of the world will record them. The national and civil life we now enjoy we in part owe to his skill and valor.

His early, quiet, and modest beginning was a fit preparation for his after days of great deeds and of public honor.

It was as a leader and commander of our own Reserve Corps of Pennsylvania that he first displayed those qualities of skill, forethought, courage, and endurance that raised him to the great command at the head of which he struck the first body blow at that army of Confederates which was marching over the soil of this State to destroy our nationality.

To him we all accord the renown of that great achievement, and for him we cherish the gratitude and pride that it is our duty and honor to perpetuate by such a memorial as this, because it is a part of our common history so dear to freemen and so useful to posterity.

Having said this to you as I said it once before, let me now in the name of the Fairmount Park Art Association present you this equestrian monument of General George Gordon Meade.

RECEPTION OF THE STATUE.

By Honorable George H. Boker, President, on behalf of the Commissioners of Fairmount Park.

Under leave of his Honor the Mayor, I accept on behalf of the city of Philadelphia the memorial which the Fairmount Park Art Association has here erected to one of our most illustrious citizens.

That the Commissioners of Fairmount Park will carefully guard and preserve to posterity this noble monument will be but the dutiful testimony of our gratitude and affection to the great soldier which it commemorates. Among the heroes of the war of the Rebellion, none issued from that fearful struggle with a higher and more spotless character—a reputation that more invited commendation and was less open to cavil—than Major-General Meade.

As the representative of my colleagues of the Park Commission, permit me to read General Meade's history backward; and to touch for the moment rather on those peaceful deeds which distinguished his latter days on the fields around us, than on the grand events in which he won fame on the tumultuous fields of battle. Standing here, with the beautiful Park which he loved so

well stretching about us, growing more and more into beauty with the passing seasons, let me recall to you the fact that General Meade was a member of our Commission from its origin until the day of his death. To him, more than to any other single man, we owe the admirable arrangement of the drives, the rides, and the walks of our spacious public pleasure grounds. When these lands were but broken, disjointed, and in some cases almost abandoned country seats—when, so far as may be said of nature, there was no harmony in the relation of one place to another—when, although the lands had been thrown into one, the dividing lines between places were as strongly marked as when fences and hedges were standing—early and late, in fair weather and in foul, the stately form of General Meade was seen, mounted or on foot, studying the topography of what was to be the Park, planning the various ways of access to its best features, blending together its incongruous details, and reducing all to that harmony which in anticipation was pictured already within his own cultured imagination. To form a Park like this is to write a rural poem in field, in wood, and in water; and Heaven lent him the inspiration necessary for its production. He gave his time without stint to the labor of love which was before him, and he found in the work its own exceeding great reward. The services which he rendered to the city in those days were priceless, and by the city unpurchasable; for what he did from a sense of duty, and from his personal artistic interest in the work itself, he could not have been induced to do through any offer of pecuniary or of political recompense. Low motives never received consideration from his lofty mind. They were not only too far beneath him to be distinguished; they were absolutely invisible to his purer sense.

I need not dwell on what was the result accomplished by General Meade's keen topographical eyes, his scientific mind, his foreseeing imagination, and his careful and sedulous labor. The work speaks for itself; its monument lies all about you. Like Orlando's passion, its inscription is upon every tree; and a cloud of witnesses, of all conditions and ages, from our thickly built city, daily send up their unconscious praises to the beneficent hand that planned and started towards completion the varied beauties of Fairmount Park.

I recall the prominent part which General Meade had in the laying out of this Park, because some may never have known of it, some may have forgotten it, and others may not understand the vast amount of labor which has been and must be expended on the planning and maintenance of grounds of these vast proportions. Let it not be forgotten hereafter. Let every cry of joy that rings through these groves from our holiday children; let every smile that curves the lips of their delighted mothers; let every breath of vigor which is here inhaled by our old people; let the panting shouts of our athletic lads, contending for their watery prizes on the oar-swept river; let the mingled sighs of the pensively happy lovers straying through these secluded glens as though they were vales of Paradise; let the united multitude of voices from all the inhabitants of our great city arise as one in grateful homage to the man who turned aside from the well-won glories of his career to plan and toil in an humbler sphere for us and our posterity.

It is not strange that General Meade's services to our Park should not be known to the world as well as they are to my colleagues, and as they were known to that public-spirited body, the first Board of Commissioners, as their records and resolutions passed at his death so clearly acknowledge. The last of these worthy men has passed away, and it remains for us, their successors, to perpetuate, and to bring before the view of our fellow citizens, the great debt of gratitude which we owe to one who was so modest that he never claimed for himself, or seemed to admit even in the privacy of his own mind, the splendid reputation which the whole world gladly accorded to him.

We weaker men are apt—pardonably so let us hope—to snuff up as grateful incense any tribute paid by our fellow-men to our achievements. I have called General Meade modest. I might rather have said that he seemed to be utterly without self-consciousness. It was my good fortune, two years after the victory, to pass through the scenes, on which his glory culminated, of the obstinate, terrible, triple battle-field of Gettysburg. A small party accompanied General Meade on that occasion, all of whom were so near and dear to him that he might have said anything in our presence, however self-laudatory, without provoking in us any emotion

save that of grateful recognition. We were all too much under the spell of the scene to regard General Meade in any other light than as a hero of romance. He might have told us anything, in Homeric numbers even, and we would have regarded it with that passionate faith which an ancient Greek gave to the Iliad. To my surprise, then, and to my greater surprise when I came to ponder it, General Meade spoke of the Battle of Gettysburg as though he were but the historian of that tremendous occasion. He made us as familiar with the whole three days' action as though we had been spectators of all parts of the battle-field, or rather as though he himself had been such a spectator, and had at that time had neither part nor lot in the awful tragedy which was enacted before him. He spoke of all his officers—of Reynolds, of Howard, of Hancock, of Gibbon, of Hunt, of Gregg, of Buford, of Geary, of Webb, of Sykes, of Sedgwick, of Crawford, of Stannard, of Humphreys, of Newton, of Warren, and of many other leaders in that long roll of glory. He praised them all to the level of their deserts, not grudgingly, but with the hearty enthusiasm of a man in love with his heroes, until our cheeks burned and tingled with responsive passion; but not one word, not one word, had he to say of Meade, nor of his share in the contest. He did not once use the pronoun I. He did not mention that he was here, there, or anywhere, during the fight. From all we could learn from him, the Battle of Gettysburg fought itself, through the instrumentality of corps and division leaders, but without a Commander-in-Chief.

Once more I say that it was not strange that the civic services which General Meade rendered to his beloved Philadelphia—important and lasting as they were to our city—should be overlooked or forgotten in the blaze of military glory which will ever surround his name. The greater light has eclipsed the smaller. What would have made the reputation of an humbler man is lost in the lustre of his greatness. But there are things to love and cherish as well as to admire and exalt; and, among us, to whom it is not given to walk heroic paths and to be the subjects of the historian and the poet, be it remembered as often as we tread these grounds how much they owe to the chief who here laid aside his arms and put his hand to the homely plow without once looking back to see who followed or who applauded him.

There are those present—certainly there are among the gray heads of my colleagues the Commissioners—who can remember the anxious days and sleepless nights in Philadelphia which preceded and accompanied the three momentous days of the Battle of Gettysburg. They need not be told what was the condition of the State of Pennsylvania, ravaged through its southern and middle counties by a seemingly triumphant foe, its capital almost besieged, and its metropolis in no remote danger should the enemy's swift marches remain unchecked. A panic was threatened among the weak and the timid, many of whom were secretly removing their wealth to New York, which it required all the efforts of the then powerful Union League and kindred organizations to subdue, so as to lift our people to a point of decent manhood. Once more those who condemned the war were raising their voices prophetic of disaster; once more the insidious hiss of the "copperhead" was heard in our very streets; and certain faces, which had scowled since Antietam, once more became wreathed with traitorous smiles. Those were gloomy and terrible days. Nor in the early times of the mighty raid did many of us know that the Army of the Potomac was on the march to protect us; and when that fact became general news, with it came also the announcement that its commander had been displaced, and had been succeeded by one as yet untried in a great command, which latter fact once more filled us with consternation and paled the faces into which the blood had just begun to creep. Then began the awful suspense of the three days of furious battle, the best news from which at first was that despite the death of the gallant Reynolds, the driving back of Howard, and the defeat of Sickles' corps, the grand old Army of the Potomac held its ground, and that reinforcements were on the way to support it. Wisdom is justified of all her children. The extraordinary measures which that inspired ruler, Abraham Lincoln, had taken with the army on the very verge of battle were found to be those best adapted to the occasion, and were triumphantly vindicated by the event when the intelligent wires of the telegraph burned with the news of Pickett's repulse, of Lee's retreat, of the overwhelming victory of the new Commander-in-Chief, and later with the welcome news that the last rebel foot had passed in flight from the soil of Pennsylva-

nia. The first free breath that our citizens drew went up in a cheer for General Meade and his valiant comrades in arms.

You all know the result of the victory of Gettysburg. It was the first fatal step in the downfall of the Southern Confederacy. It was the crisis of the war. It broke the military power of the South past recovery. After that battle the Army of Virginia was never able to assume the offensive; it fought a defensive campaign from that hour until its surrender at Appomattox. That General Meade, under God's Providence, was the instrument that effected this glorious result, I believe will be the verdict of history when the events of the war are considered in distant perspective, when its salient features become more plain and its details less obvious and perplexing. We are even yet too near the occurrences of the war to give us a just view of its true proportions, and to enable us to select from its many great battles the few on which the fortunes of the opposing forces turned, whether for final triumph or final defeat. We are as yet like explorers wandering through a broken region, who magnify every height they scale into a mountain; that which is close at hand being the theme of their exclamations and the source from which their reason forms conclusions. These may or may not be erroneous. But let us withdraw, as men hereafter will withdraw with the Muse of History, from the lands over which we have toiled so perplexedly, and from the distance view the contour of the country out of which details have vanished, and of which the prominent characteristics alone remain. Then we shall see before us a region, mountainous and bewildering indeed, but overlooked and dominated by a few lofty peaks, to which men shall give unforgotten names, and upon whose summits the sun of truth shall linger long after all the subject lands lie in darkness and oblivion. Even so will it be with the few great names that, in the lapse of endless time, will survive and keep alive the memory of our civil war, and among them one of the highest, the purest, the most symmetrical and most illustrious, will be that of George Gordon Meade.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ORATOR.

ORATION.

General John Gibbon, United States Army.

Nearly forty years ago the Seminole Indians broke out and commenced murdering the settlers in Florida. Troops were sent into the country and a line of camps was established across the Peninsula. Into one of these camps, late one afternoon, rode a horseman attended by a single orderly. He was a gaunt, thin man, with a hatchet face and a prominent aquiline nose. He introduced himself as Lieutenant Meade, Topographical Engineers, just from a reconnoissance on the hostile border. He was wet, tired, and hungry. It was my good fortune to be able to offer dry clothes, food, and a bed of blankets to one whose name was destined fourteen years later to render famous the little town of Gettysburg, in the southern part of Pennsylvania.

It was the first time I had met him. He was then about thirty-four years of age, had accompanied our army into Mexico, served in the war with that country in a subordinate position and without any especial notice. The next time we met he was a Brigadier-General of volunteers, commanding a brigade of the Pennsylvania Reserves in front of Washington in the fall of 1861.

Up to that time Meade had never commanded even a company of soldiers. Hence he entered upon his military duties totally unused personally to active command, and dependent for success upon the basis of his military education and his good judgment and tact in governing men. Although, therefore, an officer of the regular army, General Meade was essentially a *volunteer*, commanding volunteers. These, fresh from the ranks of the people, and green in all military matters,

were totally ignorant of the art of war, its stern requirements, or the exactions and sacrifices incident to the preparation for it. Meade was especially fortunate in his associates; for George A. McCall, one of the most distinguished officers of his time, was his division commander, and the other brigade commanders were destined to inscribe their names high on the glory roll of their country—John F. Reynolds and E. O. C. Ord.

There were regular officers who at the commencement of our civil war, unmindful of the different circumstances under which they were serving, seemed to think there was but one way to enforce discipline in our volunteer forces, and that was by following the old rut and routine of the regular army. Such an idea never found place in the minds of the officers I have mentioned; and the results, as exemplified in the subsequent career of the Pennsylvania Reserves, amply justified the wisdom and sound judgment of those they were fortunate enough to have placed in command over them.

It was frequently noted, during the war and afterwards, how much of the renown gained by volunteer organizations could be traced back to the right direction given to their efforts by the sound judgment, good, hard common sense, firm hand, and just dealings of the commanders who first took them in charge.

For these qualities Meade became early distinguished; and his efforts in disciplining, drilling his command, and gaining the confidence of his men were fully exemplified in the first battles they went into and in their whole subsequent career.

On the 30th of June, 1862, General Meade was severely wounded at the head of his brigade in the battle of Glendale, and retired from the field. This wound ultimately caused his early death in 1872. Six weeks after it was received he rejoined his command, took part in the disastrous campaign terminating in the defeat of our army at the second battle of Bull Run in the last days of August.

The problem in that campaign, although a simple one, was

difficult in practical solution principally from the fact that there were *too many people giving commands to the army.*

The problem was how and in what time to get the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Virginia together in front of Washington, before Lee could bring superior forces to bear upon the latter army. Moving the one army back whilst the other was moving forward would shorten at both ends the distance between them, and insure a junction in about one-half the time it would take if the army in front stood still whilst the other moved up to join it from the rear. I touch upon this matter merely that I may refer to a conversation held with Meade at the time our army was concentrated about Warrenton. He had recently returned to his command, and informed me that he had just held a conversation with the army commander, General Pope, during which Meade asked him the question, "What are you doing out here? You should be falling back towards Washington." It is a well-known fact that the authorities in Washington sent Pope orders to hold his ground in advanced positions at the front. Mark the fact that, whilst an obscure brigade commander, the future commander of the Army of the Potomac had well-defined, sound ideas upon that all-important and much underrated subject in military operations—strategy.

Too many commanders resulted in Lee striking one of our armies before the other reached its support except in part, and after a disastrous defeat we were forced back into the defenses of Washington.

By the detachment of John F. Reynolds to organize the Pennsylvania militia for the defense of Harrisburg, General Meade became the commander of the Division of the Pennsylvania Reserves, then serving in the 1st Corps, commanded by General Hooker. That division he commanded in the battles of South Mountain and Antietam. In the latter battle the corps was repulsed in its attack on the enemy's position; and, immediately after, Hooker was wounded and

left the field. Whilst lying on the ground Hooker expressed a wish that Meade (who was not next to himself in rank in the corps) were in command of the 1st Corps. This wish was uttered in the hearing of General John Buford, who, mounting his horse, rode in hot haste to General McClellan's headquarters and reported Hooker's wish. An order was at once issued placing Meade in command of the corps irrespective of rank. Thus early in the war was he specially selected on the field of battle for the high and responsible position of commanding an army corps. He retained this command until the return of Reynolds, when Meade reverted to his division, which he retained until he was permanently assigned to the command of the 5th Army Corps, soon after the disastrous defeat of the Army of the Potomac at Fredericksburg in December, 1862. In this last battle he bore with his division a prominent part under Reynolds on our left, where by a gallant charge he broke through the enemy's first line, but was forced to give ground by superior numbers.

Meade's rise had been gradual and sure, and we now find him in the position of a corps commander, where it was natural to suppose his advice and influence would have a strong bearing upon the welfare and future operations of the Army of the Potomac. He began now to assume prominence in the eyes of men, and his name was already mentioned in connection with the future command of that army. But before any change was made or even contemplated that devoted army was destined to undergo a fiery ordeal in the Chancellorsville campaign of May, 1863, and a controversy which grew out of that battle doubtless caused the eyes of the Washington authorities to be still further directed towards Meade as one of its possible future commanders.

At the close of that disastrous battle, in which Hooker was badly outgeneraled and signally defeated by vastly inferior forces, a council of war was held, at which a very decided disinclination to retreat was exhibited by prominent generals

who preferred to remain there and fight, giving employment to two whole corps which had scarcely fired a shot in the battle. It has almost become a proverb in military affairs that "councils of war never fight," but the council at Chancellorsville was one of the exceptions to the rule. Contrary to the opinion expressed by his prominent generals, Hooker decided to withdraw his army to the north bank of the Rappahannock River. It was the second instance within nine months where the *commander* rather than *the army* was whipped.

Then followed Lee's offensive operations and the race northward of the two great armies, which were finally to come in contact at Gettysburg and there decide definitely the fate of the campaign.

To say that after the battle of Chancellorsville the army had lost faith in Hooker is simply to state a self-evident proposition, for although instances have occurred where armies retain their faith in the commanders under whom they have been unfortunate, this was not one of such cases, and the intelligent rank and file of our American volunteers could not conceal from themselves the fact that we had been badly defeated by inferior numbers, and that as a consequence of that defeat we, instead of invading the enemy's country, were moving back towards Washington for the purpose of defending our own territory against his offensive operations. The members of that army could not if they would, thrust out of sight the all-important questions, "What is going to be the result of the next conflict?" and "Are we to have Chancellorsville repeated under the same commander?" With many a misgiving, directly the result of the Chancellorsville campaign, we moved northward, left Virginia, entered Maryland and were approaching Frederick City, when a staff officer came riding along the road on the 28th of June and surprised me with the information that Hooker had been relieved from command of the army. With considerable trepidation I asked, "Who succeeds him?" and I uttered a sigh of relief

and an involuntary "thank God for that" when he replied, "General Meade!"

The American people were rushed into a terrible war without the slightest conception of what war really is, and, with the exception of the comparatively few who had had a little experience thirteen years before in the Mexican war, no one had the slightest idea of the stern requirements, the suffering, heartburnings, and terrible sacrifices incident to a state of war. It will always be the proudest boast in the history of this country that a free, independent people should have gone into such a war, with such an inadequate idea of what would be required of them, and should have so thoroughly and cheerfully surrendered to the stern Moloch of war almost every right and privilege that a free people deem sacred.

To me it was the most wonderful of things to see men go into the field, proud in their feelings of independence and individuality, confident they knew all about it, and prepared to carry everything before them with the same vim and rush which had carried them successfully through many a tight business place in civil life, gradually awaken to the fact that now they were all "at sea" on new and unknown waters, where few of the rules which had heretofore governed their lives were applicable. It was touching to see how they stumbled along, trying to learn, with the blind leading the blind, and how eagerly they clung to any one showing a capacity and a willingness to guide them into the right paths, and when they found such a one how completely they surrendered to him everything which a few weeks before they would have yielded to no one but God himself! This feeling, which said so plainly "show us the right road," constituted the *opportunity* of the regular army, and almost every one possessed of the simplest A B C of the military art was eventually pushed eagerly to the front. Curtin, your great War Governor, will readily tell you how, in the latter years of the war, appeal after appeal was made to him by bodies of free, independent American

citizens for some one to reign over them, show them what to do, how to do it, and how to lead them in battle.

The Military Academy, much as it has been reproached because every graduate did not blossom into a full-grown Napoleon, can at least claim that although West Point does not *make Generals*, West Point officers have made thousands of good *soldiers*, and have demonstrated the fact that the American volunteer, when he has a chance to be instructed in the military profession, is the *first soldier in the world!* It may be truthfully asserted that although we were frequently out-*generaled* during the war, we were seldom out-*soldiered.*

Towards the close of the war what a transformation of opinion took place! Then all in the army and many out of it recognized as an established fact that an army to be successful must be a perfectly organized *machine*, subject to the control of *one man*, subject to his *sole* control; and it not unfrequently happened that the powers of command were exercised in a despotic and even arbitrary manner. Every commander who was not allowed this kind of control failed of success, and those who did succeed were conspicuously those who were not so hampered. One of the most distinguished soldiers produced by our war once said if he thought his cap knew what was going on in his head he would take it off and cast it from him. And yet the commander of one of our prominent armies confided to the Committee on the Conduct of the War with great apparent frankness his plans and purposes one month before active operations of his army commenced, giving plenty of time for the enemy to fully post himself! Fortunately no harm was done in this particular case, since the campaign, when it took place, differed so completely from the one laid down in the committee room that its own author could not have recognized it.

McClellan, who forged the bolt afterwards to be hurled so many times against the rebel hosts, was required *beforehand* to submit his plan of campaign to the War Department, at a

time when every street and almost every house in Washington was swarming with active, energetic spies! and was himself placed in charge of *one* of these armies, the operations of which Grant two years later compared to those of a "balky team."

In those two years, however, we had learned something of war. In Grant's hands were placed the reins of the whole team, and the great President, whose firm hand guided the ship of state, in bidding him good-bye as he started on his campaign, bade him God speed, and added, "I do not even ask you your plan of campaign!"

No man recognized this cardinal principle of control in the field sooner or more thoroughly than did General Meade. In his commands, up to this time, his *will*, controlled by good, sound judgment and a just administration of the law, the regulations, and the customs of the service, was the *law*. Knowing him so well, I do not for a moment question that, had he been consulted and allowed any option, he would have followed exactly the course pursued by that other great soldier of the Army of the Potomac, John F. Reynolds.

On very good authority it is stated that when a successor to Burnside was under consideration at Washington, the name of John F. Reynolds came up, as it was bound to do in any consideration of the subject, and that somebody (probably General Halleck) communicated with him and sounded him upon the subject. Up to that time the Army of the Potomac never had had a commander who had not been hampered by instructions and orders from Washington, which, if they had no other evil effect, certainly tended to destroy that independence of judgment and undivided control of the army before referred to as so essential to successful operations. The published correspondence in the records of the rebellion teems with repeated instances of this kind.

Of course there is no intention of denying to a government the self-evident duty of dictating to its armies the military and political necessities of their operations. But

having laid these down, all further interference in the practical operations in the field should cease, and the commander on the spot be allowed to carry on his operations in his own way. If he fails, the only remedy is to relieve him from command, and the risk of failure is a less evil than any likely to result from placing the responsibility upon his shoulders and denying to him the corresponding control.

Reynolds' reply was just what might have been expected from such a soldier, and is said to have been to the effect that whilst he stood prepared to obey all lawful orders sent him, yet, if any option were allowed he could not voluntarily accept the command unless *a liberty of action* were guaranteed to him considerably beyond what he had any reason to expect. There is no mistaking the meaning of this language from a soldier like Reynolds, and as a possible commander his name sank out of sight. The Government was not yet prepared to act on sound military principles, nor bestow high command hampered with conditions by the recipient, and hence a few months later, when the necessity for relieving Hooker became imperative, Meade received no warning from the Government and was allowed no option in the matter. He was awakened at midnight by a special messenger from Washington, and so completely surprised that he could imagine no cause for the visit except that he was to be placed *in arrest!*

The conclusion to which he jumped amply demonstrates how completely unexpected to him was the order placing him in command of the army. The foundation for his conclusion, when awakened to find himself confronted by Colonel Hardie, dates back to the battle of Chancellorsville, barely two months before. To properly represent the matter I must revert to that battle. As already stated, a council was held at Hooker's headquarters after the fighting had ceased, and that in it a strong disinclination to retreat was manifested. Reynolds and Meade, neither of whose corps had been seriously engaged in the battle, the 1st Corps not at all, were both outspoken in

their opinion that the army should *not retreat;* and Reynolds, whilst the council was going on, lay down, saying as he did so, "My vote will be the same as Meade's," and went sound asleep! Such a thing could not very well have happened without a thorough understanding between himself and Meade in regard to their opinion as to what was the proper course to pursue. But Hooker determined to retreat, and, in spite of the formidable condition of the swollen Rappahannock, the army successfully recrossed the river.

The statement which I now make I had from the lips of General Meade himself, soon afterwards. It is confirmed in every particular by his private letters written at the time. He had an interview with General Hooker, and the recent operations were discussed between them. To Meade's astonishment Hooker informed him that in his determination to retreat he had depended more upon Reynolds' and Meade's opinion than on any others of his officers. "But," said Meade, in surprise, "I did not counsel retreat!" Hooker insisted that he had, and that he had so reported to Washington! Upon which Meade told him in very decided terms that he should join issue with him in the matter, as he had persistently insisted that the army should *not* retreat. Hooker astonished him still more by saying, "You expressed the opinion at the council that you did not believe it was practicable, under the circumstances, for the army to withdraw, but I *knew* that it was practicable" (when this conversation took place it had proved practicable), "and therefore the main objection you had urged against a retreat being groundless, I considered you really in favor of retreating!" Here was a direct and serious rupture between the army commander and one of his principal subordinates, and *the* one of all others on whom the army commander declared he had relied when he gave the order to retreat. Is it any wonder that Meade, waked out of a sound sleep at midnight, and confronted with a special messenger bearing an order from the War Department, should have jumped to the conclusion that

the order was one placing him in arrest, rather than one giving him command of the army?

All will admit it was a hazardous thing to transfer the command of a great army whilst on the march, and almost in contact with a powerful, enthusiastic enemy, acting then energetically on the offensive. But the results of the measure justified it in every respect. Meade was equal to the occasion. He was at once assured of the enthusiastic support and co-operation of his most prominent generals, and the following day he issued his orders for the advance of his army.

The battle of Gettysburg opened three days afterwards. It is needless on this occasion to repeat the oft-told story of that three days' fierce and sanguinary struggle, in which the brave old Army of the Potomac, loyal always to any and every commander, and to its great mission, hurled back the surging waves of Lee's veterans, strewed with its dead and wounded the highest tide-mark of the rebellion, and thrust Lee's army back from loyal soil.

It may not, however, be deemed inappropriate on an occasion like this to refer to some of the incidents preceding and attending that battle, for, as in a great many other cases, some of the facts have been rendered obscure from the cloudy statements which have been thrown around them.

A commander placed in the position where, by an imperative order of his Government, Meade now found himself, was bound at once to enter into some speculation regarding what his enemy was doing, what he proposed to do, and what course was incumbent upon him to thwart his hostile designs. The known elements of the problem before him were very few. That Lee was in Pennsylvania, to the north of him, he knew, but where he was, or what he was doing, he did not know, and could not immediately discover. Unfortunately, with a capable opponent acting on the *offensive*, much of what he intends to do, or may possibly do, has to be *guessed* at. Lee *might* push on to Harrisburg, cross the Susquehanna,

capture the capital of the State, and march on this city. He *might* retrace his steps, place himself between Meade's army and Washington and endanger the safety of the national capital, or he *might*, if so disposed and mindful of the number of sympathizers to be found in the city of Baltimore, almost east from Meade's position, move directly on that city. His possession of Baltimore would still more seriously imperil Washington. Now, whilst defending both Washington and Baltimore by interposing his army, Meade, if slow in moving, might give Lee time to march northward, effect the crossing of the Susquehanna and the capture of Harrisburg. This I personally knew was a matter which filled Meade's thoughts and gave him very great concern. A glance at the map will show north-east of Frederick, and at a distance about equal to that from Baltimore, the small town of Westminster, then the terminus of a railroad from Baltimore, giving a short line of supply from that city. In front of Westminster a few miles, and running from east to west, will be found Big Pipe Creek, a stream which, from its size, would probably be found to furnish a good defensive position, its location being just what was wanted for a line of battle on which Baltimore, and consequently Washington, could be most successfully defended. Hence Meade threw forward his corps in a north-eastwardly direction from Frederick, saying to his chief of cavalry, "I have no other instructions to give you than to keep the front and flanks of this army well scouted and protected." The selection of the Pipe Creek line, whether intended as one on which to form as the army moved forward, or as a position to fall back upon after the army had passed beyond, was an admirable one. That Meade did not propose to form that line *advancing* is sufficiently shown by the fact that on the 1st of July every corps of his army, with the exception possibly of the 6th, was north of that line, and the line was being examined and located by staff officers with a view to occupying it.

Should Lee, whose positions were still imperfectly known,

suddenly assume the offensive towards the Army of the Potomac, Meade was prepared to place his army on the defensive in a position he knew all about. But on the 1st of July he received the news he was anxiously awaiting, and learned that the indefatigable Buford had discovered the enemy, and that in hurrying to Buford's assistance the brave, skillful soldier, John F. Reynolds, who never failed to obey the soldier's instinct by marching to the sound of the guns, had fallen.

I pause a moment to lay a wreath upon the ashes of this great soldier and brave, honest, warm-hearted gentleman. I was once irritated beyond measure at hearing a prominent officer attempt to defend John F. Reynolds from the charge of rashness for his action on the 1st of July. John F. Reynolds needs no defense! His conduct on that day was pre-eminently prudent, except in the one particular of *personal* exposure; but personal fearlessness was one of John F. Reynolds' characteristics. The stand he made with his troops rendered it possible for Meade to gain a victory at *Gettysburg*. In hot haste, Meade at Taneytown dispatched Hancock to replace Reynolds. As one of the numerous controversies which have arisen since the battle of Gettysburg is in regard to the powers bestowed upon General Hancock on that occasion, a simple quotation from Meade's letter of instruction, dated 1.10 P. M., July 1st, ought to be sufficient to settle the question. It says: "That you proceed to the front, and *by virtue of this order*, in case of the truth of General Reynolds' death, you *assume command* of the corps there assembled, viz.: the 11th, 1st, and 3d, at Emmittsburg." Hancock, of course, obeyed his order.

One other point in this same letter of instruction it is well to note as bearing upon the site of the coming battle. "If you think (it says) the ground and position there a *better one* on which to fight a battle, *under existing circumstances*, you will so advise the General, and *he will order all the troops up*." Mark the peculiar phraseology, "a better one on which to fight a battle."

A "better one" *than what?* Why of course than Big Pipe Creek, for the letter adds, "*You know the General's views*, and General Warren, *who is fully aware of them*, has gone out to see General Reynolds." Thus did General Meade commit substantially to his chosen Lieutenant the determination of the site of the coming battle. Had Reynolds lived the question would probably have turned upon the opinion of that distinguished soldier. But Reynolds having fallen, Meade decided to replace him by one whom he knew and on whose judgment he could rely.

Hancock's report, after his arrival on the ground, scarcely met the question submitted in his letter of instruction, but on such as it was Meade formed his decision, ordered "*all the troops up*," and by a night ride placed himself on the field of battle shortly after midnight.

Since that battle almost as many claimants for the merit of *selecting* the field of battle at Gettysburg have sprung up as there were cities to claim the birthplace of Homer. As I have shown, the action of Reynolds' command rendered the occupation of that field possible. After the action of the 1st of July, a man might as well claim merit for a fluid flowing into the mouth of a bottle because he poured it into the funnel, as to claim the *selection* of Cemetery Ridge for the coming battle. When our troops were driven from Seminary Ridge, Cemetery Ridge was the place and the *only* place for them to rally, and there they were rallied and placed in position by Hancock, whose opportune arrival on the field was fully admitted at the time in the army.

That Meade's determination to fight at Gettysburg was fully made up, is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that every corps of his army was that night directed to that point—the 5th Corps marching nearly all night and the 6th all night and part of the next day to reach it.

The battle of Gettysburg, a purely defensive one, is remarkable, not so much for anything that Meade did or did not do

there, as it is for the fact that, taking command only three days before the battle, he moved his army forward without a day's delay, placed it in position on Cemetery Ridge, repulsed all assaults of Lee's army, and compelled it to retreat out of Pennsylvania and the abandonment of its offensive campaign. His action and the results were hailed with satisfaction by the authorities and the loyal people of the country. To compare small things with great ones, Meade's task may be aptly likened to that imposed upon a man in whose hands the reins of a spirited team are placed at a critical moment and on a difficult road, and who succeeds in avoiding the ruts, rocks, and stumps of an unknown route, and lands his passengers safe and sound at the end of their journey.

His task, and the manner in which he performed it, were duly appreciated and highly applauded, when on the 4th of July, 1863, the results of the battle were flashed over the country, and men, women, and children, who had stood with bated breath when the invasion was in progress, now breathed once more, and felt that the country was saved.

I have stated that Meade's principal anxiety, previous to the battle, seemed to be lest Lee should succeed in crossing the Susquehanna before he could close upon him sufficiently to compel him to let go his hold upon that stream. But his able opponent was not to be caught in any such trap, and had already given orders for the concentration of his army near Gettysburg, in his rear, before the conflict of July 1st took place.

I do not expect this assemblage to agree with me in what I am now going to say, but as a military question I have but little doubt that, had Meade failed in preventing Lee from crossing the Susquehanna, it would have been better for us even had this city of Philadelphia reverberated with the sound of hostile guns! Had Lee marched on this city with the Army of the Potomac behind him, it is a safe prediction that his army, as an organization, would never have recrossed the Potomac, and probably never the Susquehanna.

But in making this criticism I am placing myself in the numerous category of those who after the battle have demonstrated to their own satisfaction how much better this campaign *might* have been conducted than it was. "Heroes" are always more numerous *after* a battle than *before* one, or whilst it is going on, and military problems are always more easily solved after all the unknown quantities have become known, than they are during the conflict, when most of these quantities are still the cloudy x's, y's, and z's of the equation.

It is worth no man's while to attempt to defend General Meade from a charge which came very near being made the pretext for depriving him of the command of the army. Those who knew the character of the man will not hesitate to accept as conclusive his adjuration made before the Committee on the conduct of the war, and repeated in other places with the same earnestness. "I deny (he says), under the full solemnity and sanctity of my oath, and in the firm conviction that the day will come when the secrets of all men shall be known—I utterly deny ever having intended, or thought for one instant, to withdraw that army, unless the military contingencies, which the future should develop during the course of the day, might render it a matter of necessity that the army should be withdrawn."

But, whilst not deeming it necessary to attempt any defense against this charge of an intended retreat, I believe the time has now come, and that this is a suitable occasion, to emphatically declare, no matter what errors or misconceptions may have existed in the minds of others, that there is not the slightest evidence tending to show any intention in the mind of General Meade to retreat from the field of Gettysburg on the morning of the 2d of July, or at any other time during the continuance of the battle.

A free country is sometimes a hard master, and where the whole nation was wrought up to the intense feeling which existed here in 1863, the demands made upon its public servants

are apt to be exorbitant and occasionally somewhat unreasonable. Satisfied, for the moment, with the total repulse of Lee's army and the defeat of his invasion, the next demand was for the annihilation of his army. But a well-organized, well-disciplined, and brave army, even when defeated, is not annihilated every day, and the only instances of the capture of large armies during our civil war were where they were so reduced in numbers or supplies as to render any further resistance hopeless in a military point of view.

Meade, conscientious, honest, and faithful, but quick-tempered, was cut to the quick by Halleck's dispatch conveying to him, in terms which the good President would hardly have made use of himself, the "great dissatisfaction in the mind of the President" at "the escape of Lee's army without another battle," and adding that "it will require an active and energetic pursuit on your part to remove the impression that it has not been sufficiently active heretofore."

Fancy such a dispatch sent the commander of a victorious army, with whose gallant deeds the whole country with one voice was applauding! Is it any wonder that the quick-tempered soldier, smarting under the undeserved rebuke, should have instantly replied, at 2.30 P. M. the same day: "Having performed my duty conscientiously, and to the best of my ability, the censure of the President (conveyed in your dispatch of 1 P. M. this day) is, in my judgment, so undeserved that I feel compelled, most respectfully, to ask to be immediately relieved from the command of this army."

But the Government could not afford to comply with his request, and with grim humor, in commenting afterwards upon Halleck's reply to it, Meade said it was even worse than the original dispatch, for, whilst disclaiming any intention to censure, added that it was sent simply "as a stimulus to an active pursuit!"

That great soldier who has been named "The Rock of Chickamauga," situated under similar circumstances, but with

a disposition more even-tempered than Meade's, took time by the forelock and humbly telegraphed, "if it be deemed advisable to relieve me from the command of this army I will submit without a murmur." It was thus that great soldiers treated any imputation against their faithful performance of duty or their conscientious exercise of their judgment as *commanders on the spot.*

It is not necessary to follow closely General Meade's operations subsequent to the battle of Gettysburg and up to the close of the war, for most of the facts have now become matters of history. Succeeding to the command of the Army of the Potomac in a way utterly unexpected to himself, his appointment was the result neither of personal solicitations on his own part, nor of the political intrigues which but too frequently governed in such cases. He was placed in command unidentified with any of the cliques popularly supposed to exist in that army, and yet there were not wanting those who attributed some of his prominent acts to the influence of this, that, or the other party. Cheered by the assurance of the Secretary of War that the whole power of the War Department should be exerted in his support, he selected, as far as in his power, and according to his best judgment, those on whom he could best rely in the crisis thus suddenly confronting him. That he would in this way necessarily make some enemies he does not for a moment appear to have contemplated, nor, if he thought of it at all, does he seem to have cared. With well-defined opinions and the courage to carry them out, he followed the course, in every case, which in his judgment appeared to him the best and soundest, disregarding alike hostile criticism and the carping comments of the public press, recognizing the fact that the position he occupied had always been open to public criticism, and that a sufficient answer in all cases would be the success of his army if directed on true military principles. That he was eminently qualified, by firmness and decision, for the position he occupied

is sufficiently shown by his not hesitating to fall back in the autumn of 1863, when Lee assumed the offensive, and by his retreat from Mine Run when it was discovered that an assault upon Lee's intrenched position was too hazardous to be undertaken. His decision in this last case was complicated, too, by the fact that it was, in a measure, forced upon him by one of his subordinates. Under General Warren, one of his most trusted corps commanders, was placed a large portion of the army to make a flank attack. The hour for the attack arrived, and the sound of Warren's guns was anxiously awaited. But they were not heard, and at last came the news that in Warren's judgment the attack, under the changed circumstances of the case, ought not to be made. Meade recognized too fully the rights and responsibilities resting on the shoulders of the commander *on the spot* to find fault with Warren's action, and, though with sore regret, he acquiesced in it and withdrew his army without accomplishing the object of the expedition. It is believed that General Warren lost nothing in the estimation of his commanding general, who recognized in its fullest sense the duty incumbent upon a commanding officer to protect the rights of his subordinates when, with the responsibilities of detached commanders thrown upon their shoulders, they continuously exercised their best judgment in the execution of their orders.

And now a time was approaching when General Meade was to be subjected to the most trying ordeal of his whole military career. In the spring of the year following the great battle of Gettysburg, General Grant, having been invested with the command of all the armies of the United States, established his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac. None but a military man similarly situated can appreciate to its fullest extent the trying position of the commander of a great army, just victorious under his command, so placed as to have his every order and disposition made directly under the eye of a higher officer on the spot, no matter with how much consideration and delicacy that officer may act.

No one can know, and probably no one ever will know to its fullest extent, the trials and heartburnings incident to the memorable campaign of 1864. That campaign did not really terminate until Lee's army laid down its arms at Appomattox Court House in the following April, and *then* Meade was still commanding the Army of the Potomac.

The maxim that *one* poor general is better than *two* good ones in the field will not lose any of its force when the history of the campaign of 1864 comes to be written. No man can serve two masters, nor can any army, without the two exercising a degree of consideration and forbearance not compatible with ordinary human nature during a state of war. Even with the greatest care and every disposition on the part of the superior for harmonious action, clashing of orders, with the worst results, are sure to occur. That Meade, quick-tempered and excitable as was his nature, retained the command of the army to the end, is as creditable to his patriotism and his devotion to the army as were the sound judgment and good sense of the commander of all our armies creditable to him in retaining him there.

When General Grant took command, General Meade, with the instincts of the true soldier, frankly stated to him that he probably would desire to make his own selection for the command of the Army of the Potomac, and he begged him to understand that he would cheerfully yield to his decision, whatever it might be. But General Grant made no change, and at the termination of hostilities complimented highly General Meade for the faithful manner in which he had performed the duties of his position.

The long, tedious, trying, and sanguinary campaign of 1864 followed, terminating with the siege of Petersburg, and the following spring the brave old Army of the Potomac had the satisfaction of seeing its four years' antagonist brought to bay at Appomattox Court House, where its arms were laid down forever.

From the creation of the Army of the Potomac to its disbandment in 1865 it had five commanders; of these General Meade, the last one, commanded it for about one-half of the whole period.

With one exception, General Meade possessed less than any of the commanders that magnetic attraction which does so much to bind together the commanding general and the rank and file of his army, an attraction which was so marked a characteristic in the careers of McClellan and Thomas, Lee and Stonewall Jackson, and the absence of which Grant so frankly deplores in his own person. But whilst this attraction in Meade's case was lacking, there never was a time during his long and eventful career at the head of that army when it, as an army, from the highest officer to the lowest private in the ranks, with few exceptions, did not bestow upon him its fullest confidence, and place the most implicit reliance upon his ability to command and his intention to do under all circumstances that which was best for their welfare and success and for the good of the whole imperiled country.

We are assembled here to-day, nearly fifteen years after this distinguished soldier crossed the Great River, to inaugurate in his honor this fitting memorial to his bravery and distinguished services as a soldier, his high-toned honorable character as a man, and his virtues and integrity as a citizen of this great Republic, desirous of testifying by our words and actions the high esteem in which we hold him, and to hand down to the latest generations that in the great fight to maintain this free Government, to perpetuate our liberties and our glorious example of freedom to the world, of all the heroes who found death upon a thousand battle-fields, of all the leaders who guided these heroes to final victory, this country produced no one more courageous, more conscientious, or more faithful in every trust committed to his charge, than

GEORGE GORDON MEADE.

A large number of invited guests witnessed the ceremonies, including all the members of General Meade's immediate family.

RECEPTION AT THE UNION LEAGUE.

At the Union League House in the evening, after the unveiling, a Reception was tendered by the Fairmount Park Art Association to the distinguished visitors who had attended the ceremonies, including a large number of officers of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and National Guard. A notable feature was the presence of several of General Meade's West Point classmates; also general officers of the War of the Rebellion; a number of his personal staff and aids, and many who had served under him when he commanded the "Army of the Potomac."

The guests were received by Hon. James A. Beaver, Governor of Pennsylvania.

Hon. Edwin H. Fitler, Mayor of Philadelphia.

Mr. Joel J. Baily, Vice-President of the Fairmount Park Art Association.

The gathering of more than six hundred guests from all sections of the country was a handsome and fitting termination of the day when Philadelphia paid especial tribute to the memory of General Meade.

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